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REPORT

OF A

COMMITTEE OF THE CHURCH

IN THE

NORTH PARISH IN WRENTHAM,

ON THE

REPLY OF THE REV. MOSES THACHER

TO THEIR REQUEST

TO ADMINISTER TO THEM THE LORD'S SUPPER;

AS PUBLISHED IN THE

BOSTON TELEGRAPH OF FEB. 9, 1831.

ALSO AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING A STATEMENT OF FACTS

EXHIBITED TO THE

ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL

CONVENED IN THE

NORTH PARISH IN WRENTHAM, DEC. 14, 1830.

PUBLISHED AGREEABLY TO A VOTE OF THE CHURCH.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY PEIRCE AND PARKER.

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REPORT.

In the Boston Telegraph of February 9th is published a correspondence between the Church of Christ in the North Parish in Wrentham, and the Rev. Moses Thacher, their Pastor. In Mr. Thacher's answer and remarks, the members of the church feel themselves injured; because a number of things are so stated as to leave a wrong impression upon the public mind. They, therefore, feel it to be their *duty* to come forward and correct some of the errors which have been circulated abroad.

The first thing to which we shall attend is the charge of hypocrisy, alleged against us by Mr. Thacher, in consequence of our asking him to administer to us the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Here we would observe, that we believe that a member of a church who has walked disorderly, and thereby broken covenant, is to be admitted to communion, until a course of discipline is commenced with him, and that no brother can be justified in absenting himself on that account. We also believe, that when a minister is ordained Pastor of a church, it is his duty to administer to its members the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper until he is dismissed, or thrown under censure. We believe that, however desirous the members of a church may be to effect the dismission of their Pastor, and that, whatever *ineffectual*

measures they may have taken for this purpose, they ought to receive the ordinances at his hand. We cannot, therefore, see that the members of a church, thus situated, are chargeable with acting from "*sinister designs*," or in "*sheer hypocricy*," by requesting their Pastor to administer to them the ordinance of the Lord's supper. If we mistake on this subject, we hope some one who is able will convince us of our error.

Mr. Thacher, in his answer to the request of the church, has numerous interrogations. If we have not time to answer them *all*, we will endeavor to answer the most important.

We begin with the following. "Now brethren, if you consider me as your Pastor, why have you withdrawn from my ministrations?" We suppose that Mr. Thacher, by this, means the ministrations of the *word* only. Indeed we know of nothing else to which his question can apply. For a few Sabbaths past, we have not attended upon Mr. Thacher's preaching. And we are willing to state our reasons, not knowing whether they will satisfy the minds of others as they do ours. Mr. Thacher and a minor part of the male members, with a major part of the female members, have formed themselves into what they call a new church, without our consent, and without a precedent in like circumstances. Though we are called by the Pastor, the old church, yet he cannot be persuaded to administer to us the Lord's supper, and even ceases to pray for us publicly as a church. He has given public notice, that when "he mentions the church, and when he prays for the church, he means the *new church*." He has strongly intimated, if not expressed, that the old church is too corrupt to be fellowshipped, or called a church of Christ. He calls himself Pastor of the new church, but when repeatedly asked to inform us whether he considers

himself as our Pastor,—he has uniformly declined giving an answer. He refused to administer to us the sacrament of the Lord's supper, at the usual time in December last, but upon conditions with which he could not expect us to comply. He has so sheltered himself by forming a new church, that should we attempt a process of discipline, we have no doubt that all our efforts would prove unavailing. Under such circumstances, we did think that we could not hear him preach. But that nothing might be wanting on our part, we agreed once more to invite him to preach to us, and to administer to us the sacrament of the Lord's supper. In view of these facts, the public will, we hope, form their opinion of our hypocricy.

The next question to which we would attend is, "Why have you taken from my hands the Records of the church, which according to usage are lodged with the Pastor, and had according to this usage, been in my hands for more than seven years?"

Fairly to answer this question, nothing more is necessary than to state the circumstances of the case. At our first church meeting, after the formation of what is called a new church, after waiting until a late hour, we sent a Committee of three, to ask Mr. Thacher if he considered himself Moderator of the church in the North Parish in Wrentham. If Mr. Thacher did not consider himself as a Moderator of that church, the Committee were instructed to ask for the Records, which they did. Mr. Thacher replied, that he did not consider himself as Moderator, or a member, of the church in the North Parish in Wrentham, and very readily gave up the Records. Though *we* considered Mr. Thacher as Pastor and Moderator of the church, yet, as *he* did not, we found it necessary to choose a Moderator *pro tem*; and we greatly needed our book of Records, in which to record the

doings of the church. We ask our sister churches, whether they would not have done the same in like circumstances.

Mr. Thacher again asks, "Why have you made unwearied exertions to subvert the *fund* existing in the North Parish in Wrentham, which was raised for the express purpose, and designed from the beginning for the support of the Pastor? Why has an individual of your number, now entrusted with the church Records, presented a bill to that funding society of more than *forty dollars*, for services as their clerk, (the labor of which could have been hired for less than two dollars) for the purpose of turning into another channel the avails of that fund, which had been pledged to me by solemn, express, and written contract."

How Mr. Thacher can intimate to the public, as he does by this question, that the church has made "unwearied exertions to subvert the fund," raised for his support, we know not. The church has never acted on this subject, nor has it ever been a subject before them. The funding society is composed of members both from the church and parish. If the Clerk of this society has charged too much for his services, (which is five dollars a year) we think that the society which allowed his charges are answerable, and not the church which had nothing to do with it. We believe that only two of the members voted to allow the account. Nothing but the *avails* of this fund were secured by contract to Mr. Thacher, *after the necessary charges had been paid.* If the Clerk of this society, who is a member of this church, has been guilty of covetousness, or fraud, we think it a reason why he should be disciplined, rather than a reason why the whole church should be denied the administration of the Lord's supper.

Mr. Thacher further asks, "Why did individuals of

your number *absent* themselves from that ordinance, when I did administer it, before the division of the church?"

We must here repeat in substance, what we have just said, Can the misconduct of individual members be a sufficient reason why the whole church should be deprived of special ordinances? It is true that three of the brethren did absent themselves from a number of communions; but they were not *justified* by their brethren, but faithfully and frequently labored with in private, *by some of our number*, until they were convinced, came forward of their own accord, confessed their fault before the church, and were cheerfully forgiven. But we have no evidence that any one of the brethren who went away, or even Mr. Thacher himself, ever said one word to the three absenting brethren on the subject of their absence. These facts, we believe, are well known to Mr. Thacher, and we leave it to our sister churches and to the public to decide the question proposed in the commencement of this paragraph.

Mr. Thacher further inquires, "why did two individuals of your number, one of whom acts as your Committee in presenting to me your request, go through the Parish last winter, endeavoring to excite opposition, and take measures for my dismission, without ever coming to me in the regular steps of Gospel discipline?"

If any two of our number went through the Parish last winter, for the purposes specified in this question, or for any other purpose, it was, and still is, wholly unknown to us. We will however state a fact from which, we suppose, this question must have originated. Sometime last winter, two of our brethren drew a petition to have an article inserted in the Warrant for a Parish Meeting, to see if the Parish thought it expedient to dissolve the connection existing between them and the Rev. Mr. Thacher.

But instead of going through the Parish with it, they called upon only three men, two of whom were members of the church. Neither of these men approved of the object, and the two brethren returned, and never did any thing more about it.

Again we are asked, "Why are five of your names still attached to a publication designed and calculated to destroy my ministerial and christian character and influence, which publication has been condemned by an Ecclesiastical Council of your own selection?"

We have no doubt that the publication here intended, is "The Report of St. Alban's Lodge." Five of our brethren of the church were on the Committee to prepare that Report, but whether any one of them voted for it, is not known to us. Two of them had their names detached from the Report, by causing it to be inserted in a public paper, that they never saw it until it was in print, and therefore were not accountable.

The *spirit* and *manner* of this Report were censured by the council to which Mr. Thacher refers. It was thought by that Council that it did not become members of the church to act on a committee for the purpose of censuring their Pastor, when they had not taken the regular steps of discipline. To this the church readily acceded; but they by no means accede to Mr. Thacher's statement, that the "*publication* has been condemned by an Ecclesiastical Council of our own selection," or by any other. The Council say, "We can but disapprove of much of the spirit and language of said report; and we think that the conduct of those members of the church who were concerned in framing and publishing said Report, and thus traducing their Pastor before the world, when it does not appear that they had taken any steps with him

as a Christian brother, is to be regarded as highly censurable."

Again: "Why were not less than twelve or thirteen charges publicly preferred to an Ecclesiastical Council, against my moral, ministerial, and Christian character; upon which charges I had never been dealt with, either as a Pastor or as a brother in the church, and a copy of which has never been furnished me, but is still held beyond my reach, so as to render it altogether impracticable for me to meet and refute them?"

In reply, we say, we have never prepared *any charges* against Mr. Thacher, as a church, or by our committee. Mr. Thacher doubtless has reference to a statement of facts, which was presented by a Committee of the church, to an Ecclesiastical Council convened in this place in December last. They were not designed as *charges against Mr. Thacher.* This the Committee declared to the Council. They were stated to the Council as facts, which the Committee thought had had influence in producing the divisions in the church and parish. We thought that these facts were proved before the Council, leaving it to them to judge whether they were justifiable or not.

We know not why Mr. Thacher should say, that a copy of this statement "is held beyond his reach." Before it was read to the Council, Mr. Thacher was invited, by a Committee, to attend and hear the statement about to be made by the church; this he declined. He has never called on the chairman of the Committee for a copy, nor said anything to him on the subject.

Another question is, "Why could you, by your Committee, in letters missive to not less than fourteen churches, state, that, though repeatedly requested, I had 'not assigned to you any reasons' for withdrawing from you, in

connection with my brethren, when I had repeatedly appeared before you for the express purpose of assigning reasons, and that privilege was twice denied me."

It appears from the statement of Mr. Thacher, that he *had not assigned any reasons.* Though he had twice appeared before us for that purpose, yet he was twice denied the privilege, because he would have assigned those reasons verbally, and we chose to have them in writing. When he and others asked to be dismissed from this church, for the purpose of being formed into a new church, a meeting was appointed to attend to the request. At that meeting, the church voted to ask Mr. Thacher the reasons why he and others wished to be dismissed. This was communicated to him in writing. At a church meeting, a week later, Mr. Thacher came in and offered to give their reasons verbally. But before he came in, a motion had been made to adjourn for one week. Had we been disposed to hear these reasons verbally, there was not time to hear them then. Mr. Thacher was informed that we wished to have his reasons *in writing.* He said he would furnish them, but would not set a time when he would do it.

The next week, Mr. Thacher came into the church meeting and offered again to assign reasons verbally. The church then voted not to hear them, unless they were furnished in writing. Mr. Thacher again declined setting a time when we should have them, and we have never received them, either from Mr. Thacher, or any of his adherents, *officially,* to this day. We have acted on the principle, that when a written request is made, a written answer should be given; especially when the question is of so much importance as this was. And it appears that Mr. Thacher is of the same opinion; for when we

presented him a written request to administer to us the Lord's Supper, he said to our committee, that we had sent him a written request, and he should give a written answer.

Again, we are asked, "How could you state, in the same letters missive, that we had '*declined* to accept' the offer of a mutual Council, when such was not the fact; but we returned your communication on the subject, because it was not addressed to us as a distinct and separate church."

We thought we had made to Mr. Thacher, and those acting with him, the offer of a mutual Council, and that they had virtually declined to accept the offer. When the Council had convened, we laid before them our proposal, and Mr. Thacher's reply; and *they*, it seems, thought as we did, for they said in their Result, "The Council received and attended to the papers presented to them by the committee of the church, showing that the offer of a mutual Council had been made to Mr. Thacher, and those members of the church associated with him, which offer they *did not accept*."

Mr. Thacher has stated the conditions upon which he will administer to us the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "These conditions are,"

1. To deal with, and reclaim, or excommunicate those members who are known to have walked disorderly, and broken covenant."

With this condition we are willing to comply, and think we have always acted according to it. In the late instance of discipline in this church, every question was decided by the majority. We conceive that, in churches, as well as other bodies, and in cases of discipline as well as all other cases, the voice of the majority must decide;

or it will be impossible to maintain discipline, or to act in any way as a body. But in the late instance of discipline, which terminated in reclaiming the offending brother, we had the assistance and approbation of a very respectable ecclesiastical Council, as well as of a majority of the Church, in favor of our decisions.

2. "Publicly to retract the public scandal which you have cast upon my ministerial and Christian character, by preferring charges against me, without my knowledge or consent, to an ecclesiastical Council and in presence of a large congregation, and by the circulation of the Report of the committee of St. Albans Lodge, to which the names of five of your members are still attached."

By the answers that we have given to two questions, which exactly comprehend this condition, it must appear to the public, that we have done all that can reasonably be required of us to remove all the scandal which Mr. Thacher thinks has been cast upon his ministerial and Christian character, by the Report of the committee of St. Albans Lodge, and the statement of facts before the Council, which he mistakes for charges against himself.—Perhaps one thing further ought to be stated: Mr. Thacher introduces these conditions, as if they were the same which he had stated to the committee of the church, two months before, whereas the statement of facts presented to the Council was not in existence until, at least, two weeks after Mr. Thacher had stated his conditions to the committee of the church. Hence these conditions cannot be the same.

3. "That the members of the Masonic Institution, who now constitute a majority of your church, renounce that mystery of iniquity, and throw off the influence and restraint

of those horrid barbarous and blasphemous oaths, by which they are bound to that anti-christian institution."

We do not consider that a majority of this church, is now, or ever has been, composed of Free-Masons. The late Ecclesiastical Council, convened to advise the church, recommended in their result, that the Masonic members in the church accede to the following resolution: "Resolved, that our obligations to the church of Christ require us to seek, above all things, her purity and peace; and perceiving that our connection with the Masonic institution has been, and is, an occasion of unhappy divisions in this church, we believe it to be our duty to withdraw, and we do hereby withdraw, and give up our connection with the Masonic institution." And at a regular church meeting, the Masonic members of the church (except one who was not present) with their brethren, *accepted the Result of the Council unanimously*, thereby making this resolve their own. If Masons not only "withdraw," but "*give up their connection with the institution*," what more can they do, unless they *denounce* Masonry, which is not required in the condition under consideration?

We are, therefore, prepared to answer the following question in the affirmative, "Have the Masonic brethren, in your church renounced Masonry? *They have.* We have no evidence that any of our brethren are now acting under the influence or restraint of Masonic obligations, nor that they said, "they withdrew only for the present, and that to please the Council." Until we have this evidence, we are unwilling to judge of their *motives*, or deny them *communion.*

We hope that it now appears, that Mr. Thacher had no just ground to state these conditions, as reasons why he would not preach to us, and administer to us the Sacrament

of the Lord's Supper ; and that we could not be so confident that he would not comply with our request, as to be very hypocritical, in conditionally engaging a preacher, in case he refused. We wished to treat him respectfully, and one of our number engaged to travel a very considerable distance to prevent our preacher from coming, if Mr. Thacher was pleased to comply. But we can hardly forbear calling the attention of our brethren to the paragraph in connection with Mr. Thacher's answer to our request in which he mentions our engaging a preacher.

"We cannot here but take notice of the gross hypocrisy, which is too evident in the '*request*,' which was forwarded to the editor of this paper, that he would admininister to 'the Church in the North Parish in Wrentham,' the sacrament of the Lord's supper. It is evident as a matter of fact, that such request was forwarded for what they neither *expected* nor *desired*. If this be not true, why was such request forwarded *after they had actually engaged a preacher to come and administer to them the Lord's supper?* This simple circumcumstance *proves*, beyond a doubt, that their request to him, 'whom they believe it to be their duty to consider their pastor,' was nothing but *sheer hypocrisy ! !*"

Who can read this, without asking, Is this the mild and gentle spirit of the Gospel? Is this the language of a minister of Christ, addressing those to whom he has broken the bread of life, and with whom he has lived in fellowship for seven years past, and whose moral and Christian character are the same that they ever have been?

Mr. Thacher says, "the parish, notwithstanding the efforts which have been made, by Masons and their adherents to produce an 'excitement,' and effect a division, have not been more united for seven years past than they are at present."

It is possible that, in some sense, this may be true. But if the parish is as well united as ever, will it be said that it is as large as ever? Without including those who left the parish by certificates, and the members of the church

who are also parishioners, we shall still find the number larger, who are now in the opposition to Mr. Thacher, than the number *(which was seven)* when he was ordained. The truth is, that this parish is in a very unhappy and divided state.

Since these statements were made by Mr. Thacher, we have ascertained the following facts. At a very full meeting of the parish to give Mr. Thacher a call to settle with us, there was only seven votes against him; one of these was by a member of the church. For three or four years after this, we believe that the union was increased. By recourse to the tax bill, two years ago last May, we find that there were then seventy-five voters in the parish. Since then, sixteen have left by certificates; yet all but one reside here. Besides these, there are eighteen or twenty more, who are opposed to Mr. Thacher.

In this number are included seven members of the church, which will leave ten or twelve in the parish (not of the church) in opposition to Mr. Thacher, instead of six or seven, as was the case seven years ago. From the same tax bill, we find, that those parishioners who now approve of the doings of Mr. Thacher, paid only *nineteen cents* more at that time, than those who are opposed to him.

By this statement it appears that, looking back only two years and a half, we find nearly an equal division in point of numbers and property. And we are willing to appeal to Mr. Thacher, whether he has more than half as many hearers now as he had then. It is just to state here, that the sixteen who have signed off, and the eighteen or twenty who remain and are opposed to Mr. Thacher, were friendly to him until our late difficulty. We believe it to be a truth, therefore, that instead of seven who were opposed to Mr.

Thacher, when he was ordained, there are now thirty-four or thirty-six who belong to the place, and eighteen or twenty of them to the parish, exclusive of the church, who are in the opposition. In order to give to the public a true idea of our division, we must further add, that there are a number of men of property, now in the opposition, who have aided in the support of Mr. Thacher, and congregated with us, who live within the bounds of the parish, but have never belonged to it. One of these is a member of the church. We now ask the public to say, in view of these facts, whether they received a correct impression, when they were informed that "this parish has not been more united for seven years past, than it is at present."

North Wrentham, Feb. 20, 1831, the church in the North Parish in Wrentham voted to accept the above report and have it published.

Attest: INCREASE BLAKE, *Clerk.*

APPENDIX.

The following statement of facts was prepared for and submitted to the Eccl siastical Council convened in the North Parish in Wrentham, Dec. 14, 1830. Though very imperfect as to language, and not designed for publication, it has been deemed advisable to publish it, especially as Mr. Thacher has represented it as studiously concealed.

STATEMENT, &c.

THE Committee chosen, Nov. 20, 1830, by the Church in the North Parish in Wrentham, for the purpose of calling a Council, &c. met on the 2d of December, and voted that Brothers Claudius Hayward, Daniel Cook, and Darius Ware be a sub-committee to prepare and lay the business before the Council. The sub-committee have agreed to the following statement of facts, which, in their opinion, are a part of the events which have led to the present unhappy and divided state of this church and people.

Article 1st. On the 11th day of May, 1829, Mr. Thacher stated to a brother in the church, that he was fully convinced that Masonry was a corrupt institution, and that it led directly to infidelity. On the 13th of the same month, he delivered an address before St. Alban's Lodge, in which he called the Masonic a "moral and charitable institution."* The address is among the papers laid before the Council; the notes attached to the address were written before the address was delivered. The preface, which bears date May 14th, was written and submitted to a number of clergymen on or be-

* See p. 8.

fore the 29th of April, and the testimonials of Messrs. Cummings and Warren were received about that date.

2d. A number of the brethren of this Church, and others who were present when Mr. Thacher delivered his address, stated, that Mr. Thacher, in a conversation after the address, said that he had no idea of renouncing or denouncing the Institution. Mr. Thacher does not say they are mistaken; but charges them with wilful misrepresentation, both in his conversation and in his writings. See "Letters to a brother in a Church," p. 17, and 18.

3d. On the 12th of Feb. 1830, a Committee, consisting of Dea. Asa Ware, Daniel Cook, and Benjamin Rockwood, was chosen by the church for the purpose of investigating the cause of our present divided state. The committee, after consulting with the brethren who were masons, agreed to advise the church to request the masons to withdraw; so far as not to attend, or have any thing to do with, any Masonic meeting.

A vote was written and given to Mr. Thacher by one of the Committee, with a request to have the church stop the next Sabbath after public worship, for the purpose of having the vote passed. The church tarried the next Sabbath but one after, but the business of the committee was not mentioned.

Mr. Thacher stated to the church that he had it from good authority, that there was deposited in the Knight Templar's Armory at Boston, arms sufficient to arm two thousand men. Mr. Thacher spoke on the subject at some length, and with apparent feeling. During the week, three of the brethren of the church went to Boston in order to ascertain the fact, and found the story *without foundation*; but Mr. Thacher insisted that the story was correct, and charged the brethren with going to Boston for the purpose of proving him guilty of falsehood!

4th. Mr. Thacher has charged a number of the members

of the Church, in a public manner, with acting from improper motives.

5th. In connection with the above article, we would call the attention of the Council to an article in the Boston Christian Herald, Oct, 6. 1830, headed Freemasonry and the Church.*

6th. At a church-meeting, held Oct. 8, 1830, the Church having previously voted to unite with Br. Anson Mann in a mutual Council in a case of discipline, a committee was mentioned to sign the letters missive. Mr. Thacher said that he was the proper organ of the church, and should sign the letters in behalf of the church. The next Sabbath the church tarried after public worship, and Mr. Thacher then informed the church that he should not sign the letters, and stated as a reason that the Council was called through masonic influence.

* The following is the article here referred to. It was undoubtedly written by Mr. Thacher, and relates to what took place in a meeting of this church. Several of the statements contained in it are untrue, and were publicly refuted soon after they were published.

"We have recently had opportunity to witness a *practical demonstration* of the influence of *Masonic oaths*, in a case of *church discipline*. We would give names dates and places, but, as the case is not yet entirely disposed of, we have no desire to excite prejudice in the minds of any, by which the final issue of the question may be affected.—Suffice it to say, that the offender was a Free-Mason, of the Royal Arch Degree, and clearly proved guilty of the charges alleged against him. It would, however, have been truly surprising, to any one unacquainted with the nature of Masonic oaths, to see the assiduity, with which every Free-Mason in the church, *with one honorable exception*, managed to excuse and acquit their offending brother. It was observed, by spectators, and by members of the church, that the Masonic members, with the exception above alluded to, never broke their ranks in a single instance. It was just as easy to tell before hand how every Mason would vote, in relation to any question that was taken, as it was after the vote was cast. In one instance, a Masonic brother, who had not heard a syllable of the trials, came home from a distance, entered the last church meeting, when it was nearly through, and proceeded to vote with the 'craft,' with as much promptness and regularity, as an old soldier enters the ranks, and marches to the step and order of his commanding officer. There is no mistake in this; it is what our eyes have seen, and we pledge ourselves for its correctness. It is, however, no more than what has taken place in other churches; but only affords additional demonstration, that Free-Masons feel themselves bound by oaths and penalties, 'not to speak evil of a brother Master Mason, either behind his back or before his face, but warn him of his approaching danger; and so 'aid and assist a companion Royal Arch Mason, when *engaged in any difficulty*, so far as to extricate him from the same, if in their power, whether he be right or wrong.'"

7th. On the 20th of Oct. the Council met, and the next morning the Council advised Br. Mann to make such an acknowledgement as they presented, and advised the church to accept it.

Br. Mann and the church readily accepted of the advice, twelve of the church voting in favor and none against it. There were eight present who did not vote. The next Sabbath, Mr. Thacher read to the church a paper signed by a number of the members of this church, requesting to be dismissed, for the purpose of forming a new church. The church appointed a week from the next Saturday to attend to their request. Mr. Thacher stated that if they did not have an answer *then*, they should consider it a refusal. Mr. Thacher, and a part of those who signed the paper, met the next morning at 10 o'clock, and formed themselves into what they call a new church.*

8. On the Friday and Saturday after the Council, Mr. Thacher went to members of the church, to get signers to his paper, and called on a number of women, without calling on their husbands, who were also members of the church.

9. Nov. 6 the church met according to appointment. Mr.

* In referring to Br. Mann, we feel it our duty to give a history of the case of discipline in which he was involved. There were three articles of charge brought against him, on the first of which he was acquitted by the church; and for the third he made satisfaction and was forgiven. The second was for charging the Pastor with writing and publishing Atheism. The circumstances as they appeared on trial before the church, and also before the council, to which this charge was referred, were as follows:—More than a year previous, in conversation with Mr. Thacher, Brother Mann did say, with regard to certain pieces alluded to, that he believed Mr. Thacher to be the author of them, and that they contained Atheism or Deism. His meaning was, not that Mr. Thacher was a Deist or an Atheist, but that he thought the same arguments might be urged against the Scriptures, or against the being of a God, which were urged in these pieces against Masonry. This declaration produced no breach of fellowship or affection between him and Mr. Thacher, until more than a year afterwards; and then the grievance was not made manifest by Mr. T., but by one who it was well known to numbers in the church, was not the most friendly to Br. Mann. The public will see from this statement, the reason of the peculiar nature of the result of the council to which this case was referred, and also, whether it is a fact that discipline has not been, or cannot be, maintained in the church at North Wrentham.

Thacher not being present, the church chose Br. Daniel Cook, Dea. E. Pond, and Dea. C. D. Hayward, a Committee to wait on Mr. Thacher, and ask him if he considered himself as Moderator of the church in the North Parish in Wrentham. The committee soon returned, and reported that Mr. Thacher says that he does not consider himself the moderator of said church.

At a church meeting on the 20th, Mr. Thacher denied the above statement.

10. At a meeting of the church on the 6th of Nov., a vote was passed to ask Mr. Thacher the reasons why he and others wished to be dismissed. On the 13th, Mr. Thacher offered to give them verbally, but the church voted not to receive them unless they were in writing. Mr. Thacher said that he could furnish them, but could set no time. The church has not yet received them.

11. The church, by their committee, have repeatedly asked Mr. Thacher whether he considers himself their pastor, and he has declined giving them an answer.

12. Mr. Thacher, and those that adhere to him, have held their Communion every month, thereby depriving the church of the privilege of the meeting-house. The stated period of the communion was once in two months.

13. A committee chosen by the Church to provide for the communion on the first Sabbath in December, waited on Mr. Thacher and asked him if he would administer the Sacrament to the church. Mr. Thacher said he would on *certain conditions.*

N. B.—Explanations and proof to be given as called for by the Council. Mr. Thacher has asked a dismission during the past season, which ought to have been mentioned in another place, but the committee will explain how that subject was disposed of. A true copy from files,

Attest: Increase Blake, *Church Clerk.*